DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 262 SP 035 779

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TITLE Student Teaching "Moonlighting"...Does It Have an Impact?
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 19p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Literature Reviews; Multiple Employment; *Part Time Employment; Paying for College; *Performance Factors; Preservice Teacher Education; *Student Employment; *Student Teacher Attitudes; Student Teachers; *Student Teaching

ABSTRACT

This study examined the impact of "moonlighting" on student teaching and the student teachers' final evaluations. A survey of 250 student teachers at a large midwestern university found that 49 percent received supplementary income while they were student teaching. Elementary education and special education student teachers worked an average of 15 hours a week, while secondary education student teachers averaged 20 hours a week. The major reason for "moonlighting" was economic necessity. Twenty-eight percent of the student teachers earned less than $100 per month, with approximately 20 percent of respondents in each of the following categories: $100 to $199, $200 to $299, and $300 to $499 monthly. Eighty-six percent of respondents earned an A in student teaching, with 13 percent earning a B. Sixty-four percent of respondents reported that "moonlighting" did not affect their student teaching. Forty percent thought that student teaching caused extra stress and anxiety. Results are compared with findings of a 1992 study by R. Alley and M. Ballenger. Recommendations for further research are offered. (JDD)

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ED 379 262

STUDENT TEACHING "MOONLIGHTING"...DOES IT HAVE AN IMPACT?

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1994

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ABSTRACT

Student Teaching "Moonlighting"...Is There An Impact?

A review of the literature on "moonlighting" found only one study by Alley and Ballenger (1992). How would the "moonlighting" responses of another group of student teachers at another college compare to the Alley and Ballenger study? This study was undertaken to answer these and other questions.

STUDENT TEACHING "MOONLIGHTING"....DOES IT HAVE AN IMPACT?

A review of the literature found only one study (Alley and Ballenger, 1992) on student teachers and "moonlighting". Would another study in a different location present the same data? How would students respond in another study? How would the responses of student teachers at another college "moonlightin" compare to the Alley and Ballenger study? This study was undertaken to answer these and other questions.

Student teaching is viewed by preservice and inservice teachers as one of the most important learning experiences for future teachers. When asked to rank several possible sources of the realities of teaching, junior-level education majors rate "student teaching/field experiences" as their most important source of preservice knowledge about the teaching profession (Ciscell, 1989).

Teacher educators have long been concerned about the effectiveness of student teaching programs. There are many variables which may affect the student teaching experience. One of these variables that universities have been concerned about in the past is the effects of employment or "moonlighting" while student teaching. "Moonlighting", as related to student teaching is a little studied phenomena.

Student teaching is an intensive experience and student teachers are expected to devote their full attention to teaching. Universities and university supervisors are often concerned about the potential problem which can arise when student teachers are employed or "moonlight." It is no wonder that many universities limit employment or discourage employment during student teaching.

Alley and Ballenger (1992) conducted a multi-institutional study of student teachers and "moonlighting" in Georgia, Kansas, and Tennessee. Of the 242 student teachers surveyed, 106 student teachers were employed and 136 were not employed during student teaching, which shows over 40% were moonlighting. The average income was $365 per month. When asked why they held a job while student teaching, 93% said it was for economic necessity, (73% said for basic necessities, 12% to enhance standard of living, and 8% to pay debts). This parallels the trend of the reasons given by teachers for moonlighting (Bell (1989), Bobbit(1988), Henderson (1986), Williams (1992), Wisniewski(1981)).

How many hours do student teachers work? Approximately 25% of student teachers in Alley and Ballenger's study (1992) worked less than 10 hours a week, 25% worked 10-20 hours a week, and 47% worked more than 20 hours a week.

Whe asked what the effects of "moonlighting" were, Alley and Ballenger reported the following: 57% increased stress; 37% affected physical well-being; 31% too little time; 30% affected family life; 22% inhibited teaching effectiveness; and, 10% too little energy for student teaching. Just as studies of teachers indicated (Bell (1989), Bobbit (1988), Henderson (1986), Willliams (1992) and Wisniewski(1984)), a large percentage of student teachers felt that moonlighting had no effect (39%) or had a positive effect (13%) on their teaching (Alley and Ballenger, 1992).

A distressing report was that 23% (whether moonlighting or not) of the student teachers said they would not choose teaching again or were unsure if they

would, but only 3% planned to change their profession. The reasons given to change the profession were that they needed more money or were "burned-out" on teaching. This is consistent with results of several studies where 25 to 40% of teachers surveyed said they were seriously considering leaving teaching (Alley and Ballenger, 1992, p. 103).

The effects of "moonlighting" and student teaching vary according to the individual. It does appear that "moonlighting" tends to increase stress, and diminish the physical well-being of the student teacher. However, 52% of the student teachers in Alley and Ballenger's study (1992) felt that moonlighting had no effect or enhanced student teaching. They suggest that students be counseled about the possible effects of working and student teaching, student teachers be monitored so that they do not become overloaded if doing both, scholarships and loans be provided, the experience be structured perhaps into two semesters of half-day student teaching allowing half-day of working, and that student teachers be encouraged to leave education as opposed to continuing and failing. Alley and Ballenger (1992) conclude that "Arbitrary rules banning part-time work during student teaching have little justification. Teacher educators might well consider other steps to alleviate the dilemma created by the student teacher who feels she or he must work part time" (p. 110).

Moonlighting is a fairly widespread activity for teachers across the United States. Studies in various states indicate that between 22% and 42% of teachers moonlight. It seems that moonlighting has a negative impact on some teachers, no impact on other teachers, and in a minority of cases, moonlighting has a positive effect on teaching and well-being. (Bell, 1989, Bobbit, 1988

Henderson, 1986, Williams, 1992, Wisniewski,1984). This is consistent with the results of the study done with student teachers. (Alley and Ballenger, 1992)

Presentation of Data

The purpose of this study was to extend the research on moonlighting and its impact on student teaching and the student teachers' final evaluations. The survey instrument used in this study was adapted with minor changes from one used by Alley and Ballenger (1990). Limitations of the study are that the instrument was administered in one semester and at one institution.

Demographic Data

The results of the biographical data were gathered at a large midwestern university to understand the effects of supplemental-income employment or "moonlighting" while student teaching and is presented in this section. Data was collected at the end of the fall semester, 1993. The survey was adapted from the survey used in the Alley and Ballenger study (1992). Not all students completed 100% of the survey questions. The report of the demographic items on the survey were as follows:

The total returned surveys were from 250 out of 315 students (79%). There were 132 elementary, 107 secondary/jr. high/middle high school and 11 special education student teachers who responded. There were 124 females and 8 males in elementary education, 11 females in special education, while there were 64 females and 43 males in secondary education. Eighty percent (80%) of all the subjects were female and 20% were male. (See TABLE 1)

(Insert TABLE 1 here)

More students' (60%) enrolled in student teaching for 16 weeks. The minimum requirement in the state is 10 weeks. Twenty-four percent (24%) of the students were enrolled for 10 weeks. Only 15% enrolled for 13 weeks.

The students ages varied from 21 years old through 47 years old. Sixty-four percent (64%) of all the students responding were either 22 or 23 years old (elementary, secondary, and special education). It should be noted that some of the students would not give their age. The major teaching fields of the secondary students varied, but the areas with most students were English (23), and Social Studies (34). Others were Art (8) Business (6), Physical Education (6), Foreign Language (6), Industrial Technology (6), Science (5), Math (5), Music(5), Home Ec (4) and Library/Media (2).

Forty (40) of the elementary students reported they were teaching in the rural schools, while 60 secondary students reported they were in the suburban schools. Special Education students reported an equal number of urban and suburban assignments. The class sizes averaged 20 for special education and 25 for elementary while secondary was 25-30 in a class.

Again, all the students did not report whether they were single or married, but of those reporting 195 students (85%) were single. Thirty-six students (16%) were married (17 students were in elementary and secondary education while two (2) were in special education). The occupation of spouses varied and the average approximate income of the spouses before taxes was $27,150.

For the next five years, the majority of students (90%) planned to stay in teaching. Only 10% would make a change from teaching to another position.

Special Education had no students who would change their profession, secondary had 17 students and elementary had 6 students who would change their profession. The six elementary students (5%) would change professions for these reasons: more jobs would be available, and they wanted a change of pace from teaching. The professions listed for change of occupation were: secretarial, healthcare field, music performance and speech audiology.

Seventeen of the secondary students (15 %) indicated they would make a change in profession. The reasons listed for change of occupation include: greater income, did not like teaching, lack of job availability, and better benefits. The probable professions were: athletic training (3), Army/Marines (2), management (2) , law (2), and, theatre, college administration, computer software consultant, buyer for fashion merchandising, executive assistant, accounting, and sales.

Supplementary Student Teacher Income Data

The supplementary income was defined to the students as income they received while they were student teaching. It could be through an outside job , self-employment, family income, or extra duties such as coaching, tutoring, etc. In this survey, 128 students (49%) were "moonlighting". Tha types of incoe sources are found in TABLE 2.

(Insert TABLE 2 here)

Only two (22%) special education students had supplementary income for the fall of 1993, while 50 (41%) secondary students added income and 71 (58%) elementary students added income while they were student teaching. The

majority (64%) of sources of income were outside the school system. The average amount of money derived from these positions are found in TABLE 3.

(Insert TABLE 3 here)

The amount of hours spent in moonlighting varied. The elementary students worked from 1 hour to 16 hours. There were 37 people working for 16 hours. The secondary respondents worked from 4 hours through 60 hours (which was only 1 person). This was an average of 20 hours for secondary students. Special Education worked 14 and 16 hours each. The students perceived their income as needed for two major areas: 1) to meet the basic existence of life (40%), and 2) to pay specific debts (36%).

Students reported various effects of moonlighting on their time and effort while student teaching. The majority (64%) of all the students felt that working did not affect their student teaching and according to the grades the students received (which were predominately A's) it did not affect them. Forty percent (40%) of the students thought that student teaching caused extra stress and anxiety. TABLE 3 reports the effects of the time and effort spent while the students earned a supplemental income and the grades they received.

(Insert TABLE 4 here)

Out of the 216 students who responded to "did 'moonlighting' affect your grade?", only 10 (5%) felt moonlighting affected their grades. Several of the students who were "moonlighting" reported they had worked all through school, an that they were able to work and teach very well. They felt that working helped them be self-disciplined and motivated.

The comments received from student teachers about "moonlighting" are

indicators of the typical responses of students at this institution. Comments added to the survey by students who agreeed with moonlighting were: essential to live (43), and allow students to moonlight (don't restrict)(25), helps self-dscipline (5), university should pay students (6). Students responding with no to moonlighting suggested the following: its too difficult to keep up(13), unless necessary, don't do it (6) and we are overwhelmed at all the work in student teaching (5).

SUMMARY

At the conclusion of the fall semester, 1993, student teachers were given a survey to complete concerning their "moonlighting" activities. The results of 250 returned surveys (79%) revealed some important data. They were:

1. Almost half of the students were "moonlighting" in this study (40%). This was consistent with the reported study by Alley and Ballenger (1992).

2. Elementary and Special Education students worked an average of 15 hours, while secondary students averaged 20 hours a week. Alley and Ballenger noted that 25% of the student teachers surveyed worked less than 10 hours a week, while 25% worked 10-20 hours a week, and 47% worked more than 20 hours,

3 The major reason (76%) for "moonlighting", according to the students, is economic necessity. This parallels the reasons given for moonligting given in Alley and Ballenger's study; however, in the earlier study 93% reported they were "moonlightin".

4. Over half the students' (64%) reported "moonlighting" did not

affect their grade, while 53% reported it did not affect their teaching either. In the Alley and Ballenger's study, 39% of the student teachers reported no effect, while 13% suggested that moonlighting had a positive effect on their student teaching.

5. The amount of money earned varied. The highest percentage of students earned at least $100 (28%);from $100-$199 (19%); $200-$299 (22%); $300-$499 (21%;) and over $500 (8%). Students in this study earned less than reported by Alley and Ballenger, which was $365.00 a month

6. Twenty percent of the students (elementary, 4% and secondary 17%), would make a professional change. In the Alley and Ballenger study, 23% indicated a change, so they were similar in percentages.

6. Comments by Elementary students indicated one should not "moonlight" (39%). Only three secondary students answered "no" to this question (6%). In this day and age students often must "moonlight" to assure themselves of the essentials to live. This is obvious in this study. Additionally, "moonlighting" did not appear to affect the grades of the student teachers, when the average time for working was around 15 hours a week. "Moonlighting" is common (40%) among the student teachers in this study and these results are similar to the only other published study by Alley and Ballenger (1992).

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that another survey be conducted over a two year period. Does a pattern exist that is comparable to the one done in the fall of 1993? Is there an increase in the number of students "moonlighting"? Should

universities be concerned about student teachers "moonlighting?"

2. The authors also suggest that an interview or survey be conducted with classroom teachers (supervising) regarding the effects of moonlighting as related to student teachering. How do they feel about the student "moonlighting"? Did it affect the students' teaching? What are the classroom teachers' perceptions of student teachers "moonlighting"?

3. It is suggested that university supervisors follow closely the students' who "moonlight". What are the university supervisors perceptions? What are their suggestions regarding student teachers moonlighting?

4. It is recommended that a follow up study be conducted on moonlighting student teachers as they begin their teaching profession. Do they continue to "moonlighting" after they have been working for a year? How many of them changed their profession after graduating?

5. How many students "moonlight" without informing the university? Should the students be required to do this? Should there be a limitation of the number of hours? Could the type of "moonlighting" cause problems for the student?

The implications of these questions should be a concern of teacher educators. Further research should be conducted on "moonlighting".

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TABLE 1

STUDENT TEACHING LEVELS/GENDERS

Level	%	Level	%	Level	%	Total %
Elementary		Secondary/Jr./Middle		Special Education		
132	.53	107	.43	11	.04	100%
Gender	%	Gender	%	Gender	%	
Elementary		Secondary/Jr./Middle		Special Education		
Female 124	.50	64	.26	11	.04	80%
Male 8	.03	43	.17	0	0	20%
TOTAL	.53		.43		.04	100%

TABLE 2

SUPPLEMENTARY INCOME POSITIONS/INCOME EARNED*

Elementary	Secondary	Special Education
Administrative Assistant (1)	Adminstrative Assistant (3)	
Babysitting (4)		Babysitting (1)
Bartender (2)	Bartender (2)	
Cheerleading Sponsor (2)	Cheerleading Sponsor (2)	
Chiropractor (1)		
Clerk (15)	Clerk (7)	Clerk (2)
Clerical (2)	Clerical	
Coached (5)	Coached (10)	
Fast Food (2)	Fast Food (2)	
Farm (1)		
Home Improvement (1)	Home Improvement (1)	
Instr. (Girl Scouts etc.) (2)		
Lifeguard/Swim Instr. (2)	Lifeguard (2)	
Management (1)	Management (1)	
Personal Care Assistance (5)		
Receptionist (0)	Receptionist (1	
	Referee (1)	
	Sales Associate (1)	
Substitute Teacher (1)	Substitute Teacher (4)	
	Taught music (4)	
Tutored (2)	Tutored (1)	

*(Not all student replied.)

TABLE 3

INCOME EARNED DURING STUDENT TEACHING*

	Elementary	Secondary	Special Education	%
Less than $100 per month	21	15	1	28%
$100 - $199	17	8		19%
$200 - $299	15	13		22%
$300 - $499	13	13	1	21%
More than $500	4	7		08%

*Not all students replied.)

TABLE 4

EFFECT OF TIME AND EFFORT FROM STUDENT TEACHING/GRADES EARNED*

	Elem.	Sec.	Spec. Ed.	%
Does not affect my teaching.	42	32	1	64%
Causes extra stress and anxiety.	20	26	1	40%
Has no impact on my physical well-being.	14	13		23%
Leaves too little time for teaching preparation.	14	10	1	20%
Makes it difficult to participate in inservice activities.	8	10	1	16%
Has no impact on my stress and anxiety.	13	5		15%
Positively affects my physical well-being.	9	8		15%
Enhances my teachng effectiveness.	10	1		09%
Reduces my stress and anxiety.	8	3		09%
Is demeaning to me to have to earn supplemental income.	4	6		08%
Negatively affects my family relationships.	4	3	1	06%
Enables me to read and study more.	5	2		06%
Reduces my effectiveness as a teacher.	1	5		05%
Leaves me with little energy or interest for teaching.	2	1	1	03%

*(Not all students replied.)

GRADES EARNED				
A	117	88	11	86%
B	15	17		13%
C	0	2		008%
D	0	0	0	